

Is It Time to Ban Electric Vehicles?



At left: An electric bike with a battery, in the Bronx, the day after a five-alarm fire tore through a market that fire officials are blaming on a faulty lithium-ion battery, on March 6, 2023, in New York City. Numerous people were injured and it took approximately 200 firefighters to bring the fire under control. Fires from these batteries are increasing nationally.

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The New York Fire Department recently reported that so far this year there have been 108 lithium-ion battery fires in New York City, which have injured 66 people and killed 13.

According to FDNY Commissioner Laura Kavanagh, "There is not a small amount of fire, it (the vehicle) literally explodes." The resulting fire is "very difficult to extinguish and so it is particularly dangerous."

Last year there were more than 200 fires from batteries from e-bikes, EVs and other devices.

A fire ignited at an e-bike shop and killed four people near midnight on the morning of June 20. Two individuals were left in critical condition.

The fire commissioner has warned New Yorkers that such devices could be very dangerous and typically explode in such a way that renders escape impossible.

FDNY also reports that in just three years, lithium-ion battery fires have surpassed those started by cooking and smoking as the most common causes of fatal fires in New York City. It's happening all over the country as these blazes have become commonplace.

Cars and e-bikes are randomly blowing up in driveways and garages.

Now let's be honest: 13 deaths in a city the size of New York with some eight million people is hardly an epidemic. Regulations should always be based on a cost versus benefit calculation, or there would be no cars at all.

And yet the same scaremongers on the left who have zero tolerance and want bans for small risks when it comes to everything from swimming pool diving boards, gas stoves, plastic straws, vaping, fireworks and so on, have a surprisingly high pain threshold when it comes to people dying or suffering critical injuries from "green" electric battery fires.

Or consider this: In 1965, Ralph Nader almost single-handedly helped ban the popular Chevrolet Corvair — famous for its engine placed in the back trunk of the car.

Nader's bestselling shock book "Unsafe at Any Speed" declared the car was deadly.

But there was no real evidence of that claim, and to this day there are no reliable statistics on how many passengers — if any — died in Corvairs from rear-end accidents.

What is indisputable is that EVs will cause far more deaths than Corvairs ever did.

One other example: There have been more fatalities in just one city in a single year from lithium-ion batteries in cars than all the people who died from the 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear plant accident — which was zero.

Yet, after the accident, thanks to the environmentalists' fear campaign (with the help of the blockbuster anti-nuke movie "The China Syndrome"), no domestic nuclear plants were built for three decades.

That is despite the fact that nuclear plants emit no greenhouse gases.

But with EVs, the greens are pushing aside any concerns about the collateral damage of deaths and injuries. Biden wants to mandate that nearly *all* new cars sold in the U.S. be EVs by 2032.

If that happens, many thousands of Americans may die or will be injured from electric vehicle fires.

All this is especially hypocritical because once upon a time the left's mantra was "no trading blood for oil."

Now they are willing to trade blood in exchange for getting Americans to stop using oil.

An irony of all this is that because of all the energy needed to produce windmills, solar panels and electric batteries, new studies are showing that the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to this "net zero" transition is close to zero.

It turns out, green energy causes some pollution, too.

For the record, I'm not in favor of the government banning EVs or e-bikes or just about anything.

I just believe that we should make policy decisions based on real and factual risk assessments, not false scares and sensationalism.

As for the future of EVs, maybe it's time for Ralph Nader to write a sequel to "Unsafe at Any Speed."

Stephen Moore is a senior fellow at the Heritage Foundation and a co-founder of the Committee to Unleash Prosperity. His latest book is "Govzilla: How the Relentless Growth of Government Is Devouring Our Economy." Read Stephen Moore's Reports — [More Here](#).